

HA-1340

1886

Ames Methodist Church
110 ~~214~~ Baltimore Pike
Bel Air
Private

Ames Methodist Church was the first black congregation in Town (1876). It first met in a wagon shed which they moved across the Pike. The original church is the east meeting room. This simple and reverent carpenter gothic church was built in 1886. Particularly notable is the bell tower with carved decoration and the wall brackets for kerosene lamps. A glass case in the foyer holds exhibits relating to the history of the church and the history of Harford County's black community. Members of Ames Church have been leaders in that community since its founding in 1876.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

HA-1340
1313404608

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Ames Methodist Church

AND/OR COMMON

same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

110214 Baltimore Pike

1st

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Harford

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ MUSEUM☐ COMMERCIAL☐ PARK☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ ENTERTAINMENT☒ RELIGIOUS☐ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ MILITARY☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Trustees of the Ames Methodist Church

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

214 Baltimore Pike

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code
Maryland 21014**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: 55

Folio #: 432

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

HA-1340

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This small asphalt-sided, gable-roofed carpenter gothic church is on the north side of the street at ~~214~~^{214 1/2} Baltimore Pike, in the Town of Bel Air, Harford County, Maryland. The building is composed of the central church block with entrance tower, a lower addition to the rear, and the Sunday School wing attached to the northeast corner of the rear additions and projecting to the east. The three bay structure appears to rise to two stories in the front elevation; these second story windows light the balcony. The entrance is in the bell tower which forms the central bay of the structure. Double five panel doors in a wooden surround are topped by a pointed-arch two-paned transom. The windows in the three sides of the tower and in the front elevations of the church block are double-hung sash, 5/4, set in pointed-arch wooden surrounds. The fifth pane in the top sash forms the point. Each pane is of a different color, simulating but not copying stained glass. The entrance tower has a diamond-shaped window with small panes set in a wooden surround at the third level just beneath its hipped roof. The tower terminates in an open belfry with decorative brackets in the angle between the cornice and the four posts. A balustrade encircles the lower belfry's portion. No bell hangs in the tower. The side elevations contain four bays with similar but taller windows, 5/6. A side entry occurs in the last bay of the west elevation. The back addition, which contains the choir robing room and an extension of the chancel, has the same roof slope as the main block but does not reach to the same height. The three bays have two windows similar to those on the side elevation. The third (west) bay has a four pane window set in a wooden surround. The east two windows light the chancel. The smaller one lights the robing room. The west elevation of the addition contains two bays, a five panel door in a wooden surround to the north and a small pointed-arch window to the south.

The gable-roofed meeting room attached to the back and east side of the rear addition contains the oldest portion of the building, the 1876 warehouse the congregation purchased from Robert Bounds and hauled across the Pike to the church lot. The front (south) elevation of the ell has a five panel door set in a simple wooden surround flanked by double-hung sash windows, 6/6. The side (east) elevation is divided into three bays and exhibits three windows that match the front ones with an outside brick stove chimney between the northernmost and the center bay. The rear (north) ell elevation shows that the kitchen was added to the meeting room in a shed-roofed addition to the eave of the gable roof. Two 6/6 windows, one centered under the gable and one centered under the shed, occur in this elevation. The entrance to the kitchen is in the west elevation of the ell. The door has three vertical panes in the upper half over horizontal panels. To the south of the door is a 2/2 window.

The interior of the main block consists of the church proper -- chancel separated from the nave by the communion rail, and an entry

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES 1886

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Frank E. Calder

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This simple carpenter Gothic Church was the home of the first black congregation in Bel Air. It is significant in Bel Air's architectural history as an example of the belief of Christians both rich and poor that Gothic was "the only proper style" for a church. It represents the simple and reverent attitude of Bel Air's black community toward a space for worship. Taken in its context, this church has the same relation to the heavenly aspirations of the black community in Bel Air as the Cathedral at Chartres had for the citizens of that medieval town.

A second significance equal or greater in importance than the architecture is the central and fundamental place this church and its congregation had for the emerging black citizens. Throughout American history the church has been the one continuing organization blacks have had for leadership training, fellowship and control of their lives. This congregation provided that focal point for Bel Air's black community. It was, and still is, the single most important institution in that community.

The Bel Air black Methodist Episcopal congregation was part of the Gunpowder Circuit of the Washington Conference around 1872. The circuit rider had eight churches in his care. Each Sunday he held meetings at two of them. That meant that each congregation heard preaching once a month or so. In 1876 under the leadership of Rev. Eden Hammon the congregation bought a wagon shed to use as a church. They moved the building across the Baltimore Pike onto land they had rented from the estate of Thomas Hays. The yearly rent was \$20. This building was incorporated into the present church in 1940 as part of the meeting room in the east wing. After using the shed for ten years, the congregation decided to build a more suitable building. Under the leadership of Reverend T. H. Dansbury, the building committee, chaired by Joseph Toney, purchased the lot for \$600 and let a contract to builder, Frank E. Calder. Calder offered to take down the old building for \$500 (which wasn't done) and build a new church for \$900. Some years later a parsonage was built on the lot; it is still next door to the west but is no longer used as a parsonage. The church was called the Ames African Methodist Episcopal Church. The congregation was united with the Methodist Church in 1939. In 1964 it was transferred to the Baltimore Conference. Since 1968 it has been part of the United Methodist Church.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bel Air Centennial Book

Interview with Rev. George Gwynn and James Dorsey

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

This property occupies the eastern part of parcel #1225 in the Town of Bel Air

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marilynn Larew, Architectural Historian

27 March 1979

ORGANIZATION

Town of Bel Air

DATE

838-8700

STREET & NUMBER

39 Hickory Avenue

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Bel Air

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

foyer behind the screen supporting the balcony -- and the choir robing room in the northwest corner of the rear addition (next to, but separated from, the chancel). On the other side of the chancel (to the northeast) is the passage to the meeting room. Behind the passage is the kitchen.

The nave walls are white plaster above brown feathered wainscotting. Four brackets for kerosene lamps remain on the walls. The church was wired for electricity in the 1930's. The two aisles and the chancel are carpeted in wine-colored broadloom. The curved pews and the organ were donations from the white Methodist Episcopal Church in Bel Air, used items that congregation was replacing. A tapestry of the Last Supper hangs over the choir. Three late Victorian chairs are behind the pulpit, an arm chair and two side chairs.

Evidence of a boarded up bull's eye window on the inside of the front (south) elevation suggests that the entrance tower was not original. Other changes have been made over the years. As late as 1940 the original church was still free-standing on the lot to the north of the 1886 building. In that year it was moved to its present position and extended to form the present meeting room. The choir robing room and the kitchen were added at that time. The chancel was extended back flush with the robing room, and the balcony and corner staircase were added, along with the partition which forms the entrance foyer in the rear of the church. In the west end of the foyer is a glass case displaying historical items about the church and about the black history of Bel Air.

The slightly Gothic touches to this small church make it similar to many small country churches built in the 19th century throughout the nation. Both the exterior and the interior of the building exemplify a simple and reverent attitude toward the design of a place of worship, a church designed in what was for the 19th century "the only proper style" -- Gothic.

A List of Ministers of the Ames Church

1876	Eden Hammon	1946	Rufus Abernathy, Sr.
1886	T. H. Dansbury	1949	Clarence L. Davis
1900	John W. Carroll	1953	Uzzah D. Chambers
1907	Columbus E. Brown		Samuel Carter
1911	Charles H. Matthews	1958	Harry J. McDonald
1922	Fairfax F. King	1960	Joseph W. Carroll
	George E. Curry	1964	Isaac Abraham Sherman
1929	Virgil N. S. Hughes	1969	J. David Townsend
1931	Charles Carroll Nelson	1972	George B. Gwynn
	B. T. Perkins		
1937	Nathan Minor		
1941	Alvin Hall Whitefield		
1944	A. Edward Berry		

AMES METHODIST CHURCH

55/432

15 May 1886

William F. Hays and George A. Hays
to

Methodist Episcopal Church \$600
the lot on the Baltimore Pike
leased from Samuel Galloway, trustee
in the will of Thomas Hays
as well as the next west lot.

This lease was unrecorded but seems to have
been dated c. 1876. The ground rent is said
to have been \$20 per year.

This land, like much land in and around
Bel Air, was owned by Thomas Hays. This
part was devised by Hays (1861, 7/752) to
his daughter, Sally, and her husband,
Samuel Galloway. If the couple left no
issue, the property was to pass to
Thomas Hays, Jr.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
21 STATE CIRCLE
SHAW HOUSE
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HISTORIC SITES SURVEY FIELD SHEET
Individual Structure Survey Form

SURVEY NUMBER: HA-1340

NEGATIVE FILE NUMBER:

UTM REFERENCES:
Zone/Easting/Northing

U.S.G.S. QUAD. MAP:

PRESENT FORMAL NAME:
Ames Methodist Church

ORIGINAL FORMAL NAME:
Same

PRESENT USE: *Church*

ORIGINAL USE: *Same*

ARCHITECT/ENGINEER:

BUILDER/CONTRACTOR:
Frank E. Calder

PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE:

Excellent () Good ()

Fair (✓) Poor: ()

THEME: *architecture*

STYLE: *country Gothic Carpenter Gothic*

DATE BUILT:

1886

COUNTY: *Harford*

TOWN: *Bel Air*

LOCATION:
*110 214 Baltimore Pike
Bel Air*

COMMON NAME:
Ames Methodist Church

FUNCTIONAL TYPE: *Church*

OWNER: *Same Trustees of the Ames Methodist Church*

ADDRESS: *214 Baltimore Pike
Bel Air*

ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC:

Yes () No () Restricted (✓)

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Local (✓) State () National ()

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Structural System

1. Foundation: Stone (✓) Brick () Concrete () Concrete Block ()
2. Wall Structure
 - A. Wood Frame: Post and Beam () Balloon ()
 - B. Wood Bearing Masonry: Brick () Stone () Concrete () Concrete Block ()
 - C. Iron () D. Steel () E. Other:
3. Wall Covering: Clapboard () Board and Batten () Wood Shingle () Shiplap ()
Novelty () Stucco () Sheet Metal () Aluminum () Asphalt Shingle (✓)
Brick Veneer () Stone Veneer ()
Bonding Pattern: *over shiplap -*
Other:
4. Roof Structure
 - A. Truss: Wood (✓) Iron () Steel () Concrete ()
 - B. Other:
5. Roof Covering: Slate () Wood Shingle () Asphalt Shingle (✓) Sheet Metal ()
Built Up () Rolled () Tile () Other:
6. Engineering Structure:
7. Other:

Appendages: Porches () Towers (✓) Cupolas () Dormers () Chimneys () Sheds () Ells (✓)
Wings () Other:

Roof Style: Gable (✓) Hip () Shed () Flat () Mansard () Gambrel () Jerkinhead ()
Saw Tooth () With Monitor () With Bellcast () With Parapet () With False Front ()
Other:

Number of Stories: *1*

Number of Bays: *3*

Approximate Dimensions: *32' x 67'*

Entrance Location: *Balto. Pike*

THREAT TO STRUCTURE:

No Threat (✓) Zoning () Roads ()
Development () Deterioration ()
Alteration () Other:

LOCAL ATTITUDES:

Positive (✓) Negative ()
Mixed () Other:

ADDITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL OR STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Interior. white plaster above brown feathered wainscoting, wine colored carpet, chancel & down the 2 aisles. Communion rail w/ turned balusters in front, plain square ones on sides. Curving pews from old Bel Air Church in front, plain square ones on sides. Curving pews from old Bel Air Church. Organ from that source, too. Three chairs, center, armchair & 2 side chairs behind pulpit at choir rail. Late victorian, carved apron, turned legs, padded seats back upholstered to match rugs. Fluted panels on back of knobs on arms of center chair. Tapestry of last supper on back of wall behind choir, plain wooden cross hanging over chancel. Blue slat ceiling. 4 brackets for kerosene lamps still on walls. Church worked c 1930's

RELATED STRUCTURES: (Describe)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

1st black church in Bel Air
1st black Methodist church in Bel Air
~~church~~ church on site from 1876 when they bought a wagon shed & moved across the street to a rented lot; bought the lot 1886 from the Haynes & constructed. Main part of present church. 1940 original church which was still standing on lot to N. moved to form an ell on the church. It is the community room (w/extension). Choir robing room added then & kitchen. Choir extended back & balcony, staircase erected & partition w/2 arched entries added to rear of church to form entrance hall. Balcony used for storage & Sunday School Class.

REFERENCES:

MAP: (Indicate North in Circle)



SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:

Open Lane() Woodland() Scattered Buildings()
Moderately Built Up() Densely Built Up()
Residential() Commercial(✓)
Agricultural() Industrial()
Roadside Strip Development()
Other:

M. Larew

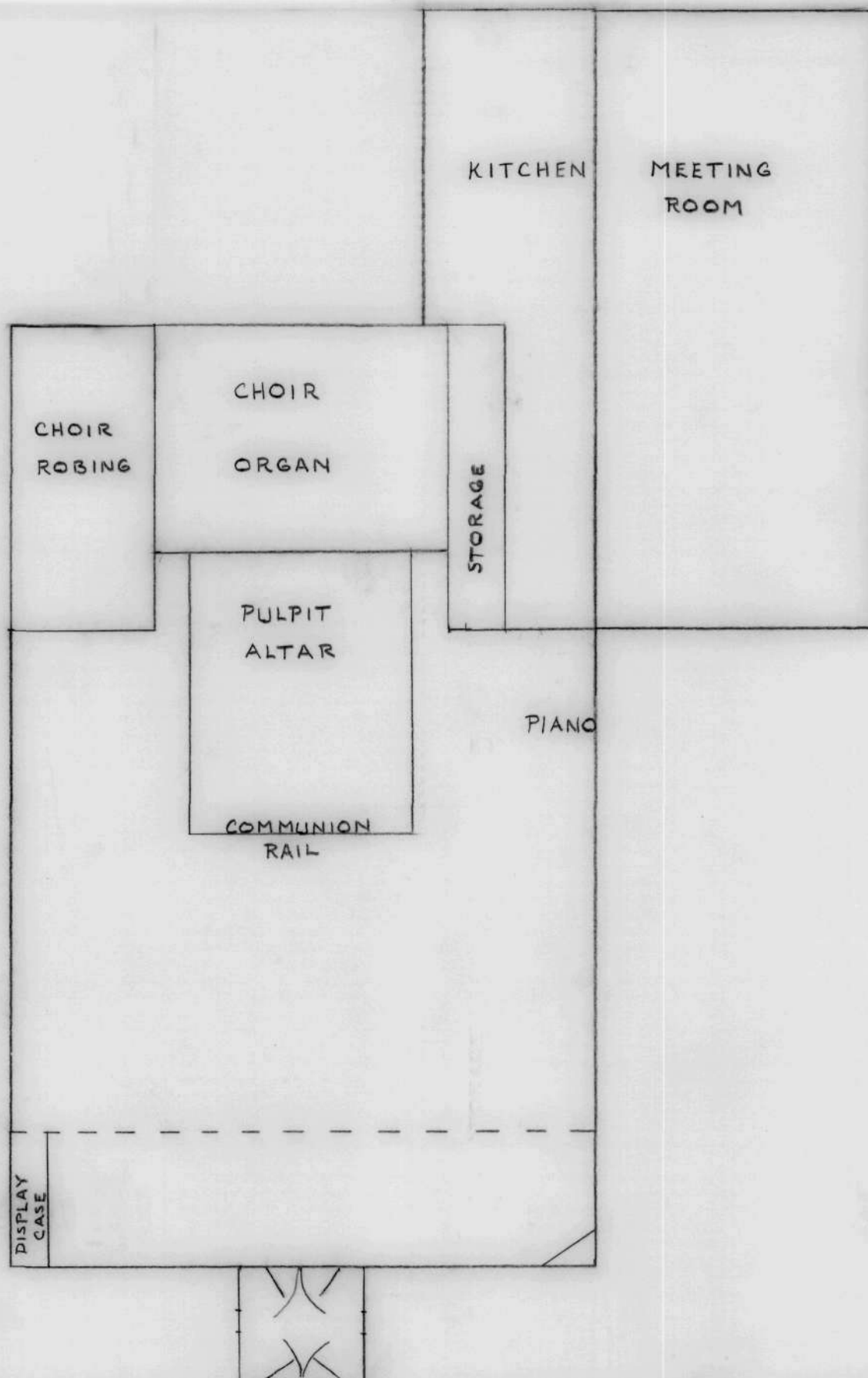
RECORDED BY:

Town of Bel Air

ORGANIZATION:

July 1978

DATE RECORDED:



DOWN BY: MARILYN LAREW

TRACED BY: G. CUNO

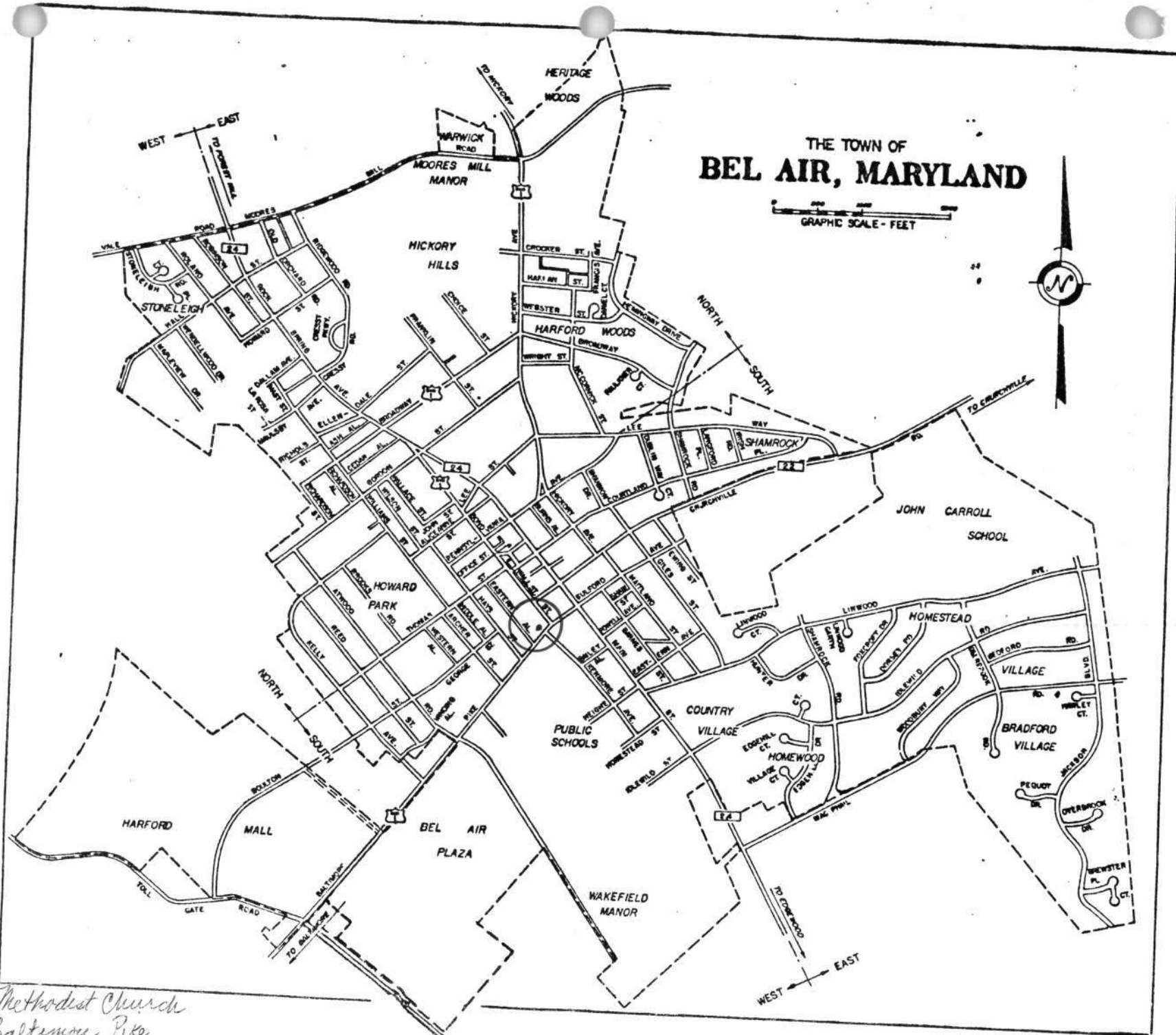
AMES METHODIST CHURCH
1886

HA-1340

SCALE: 1"=8'

THE TOWN OF BEL AIR, MARYLAND

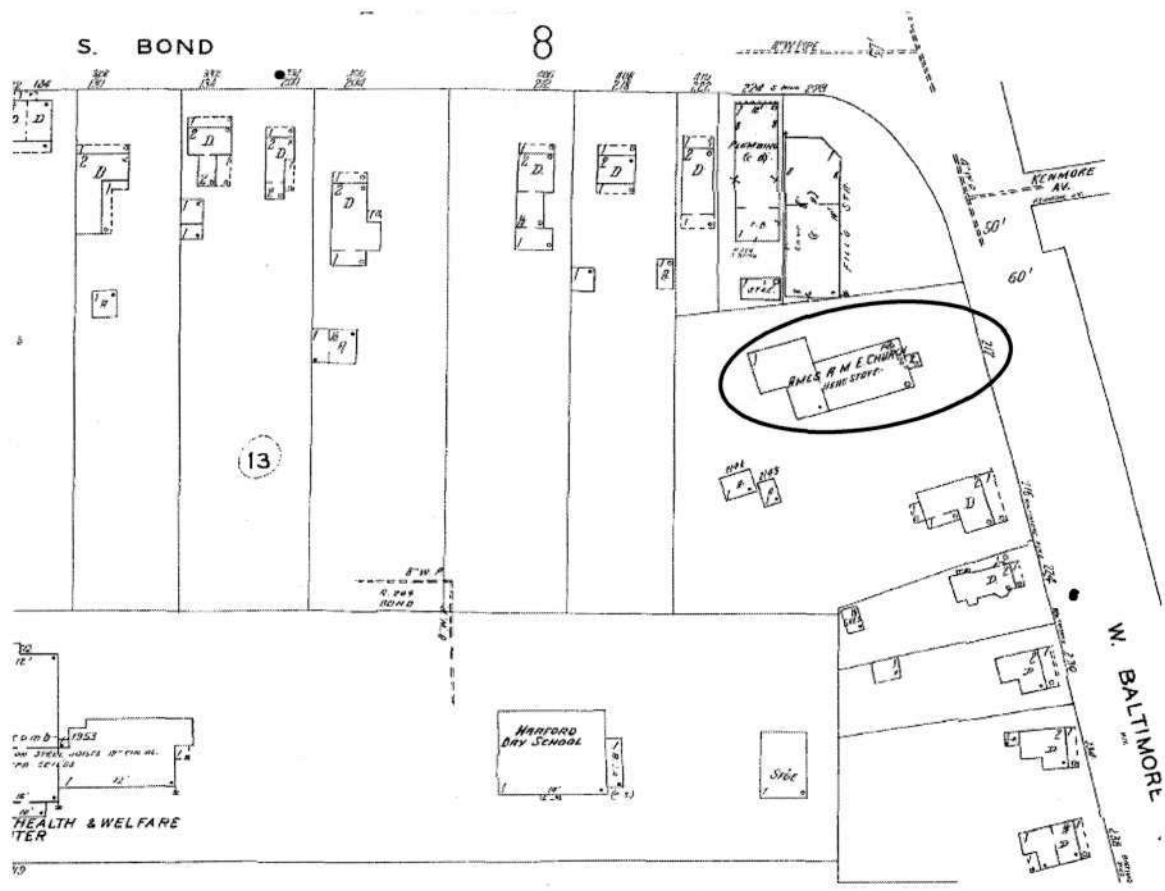
GRAPHIC SCALE - FEET



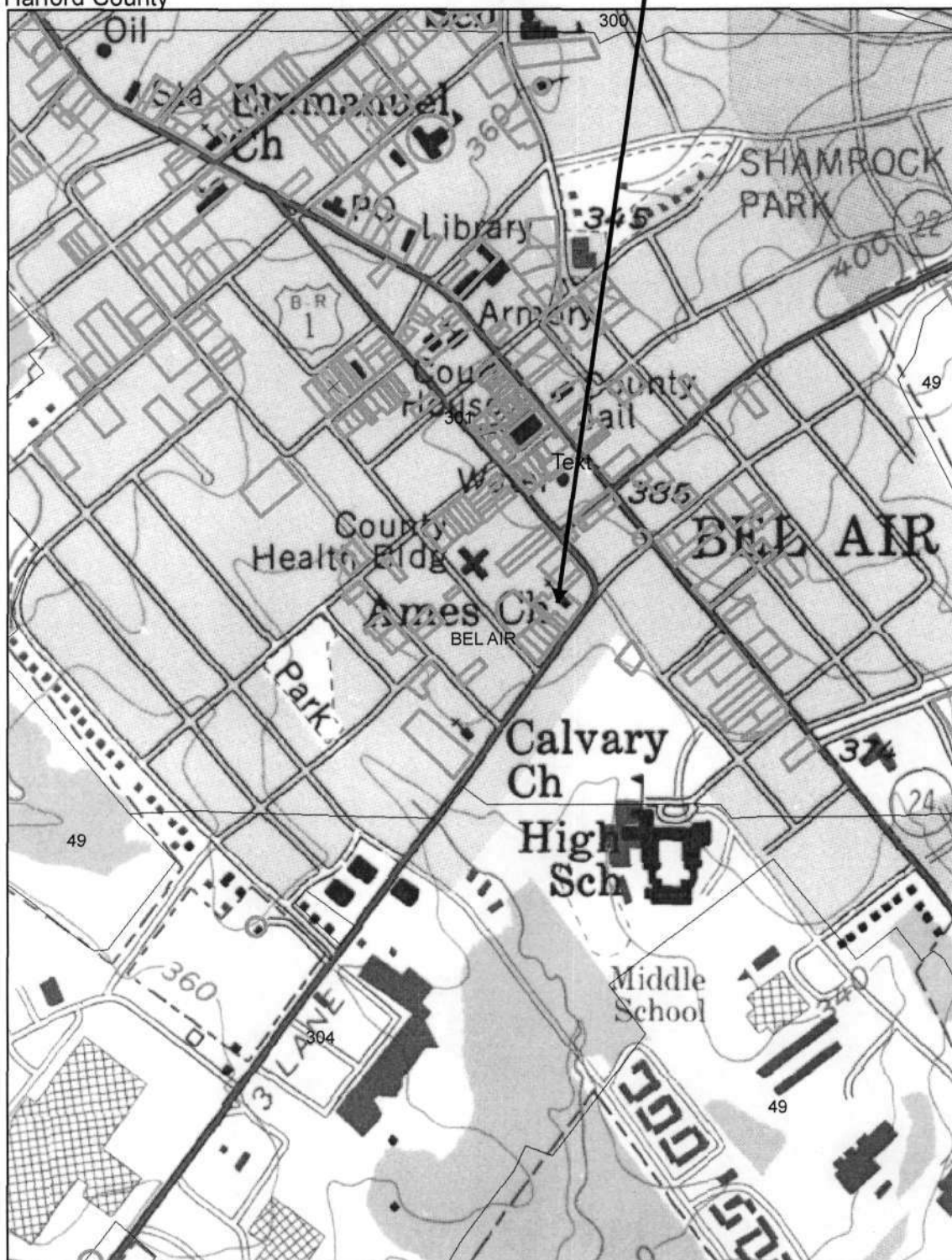
HA-1340

Ames Methodist Church
214 Baltimore Pike
Bel Air

HA-1340
 Ames Methodist Church
 110 Baltimore Pike
 Bel Air
 Sanborn Bel Air Aug. 1930-Sept. 1961
 Harford County

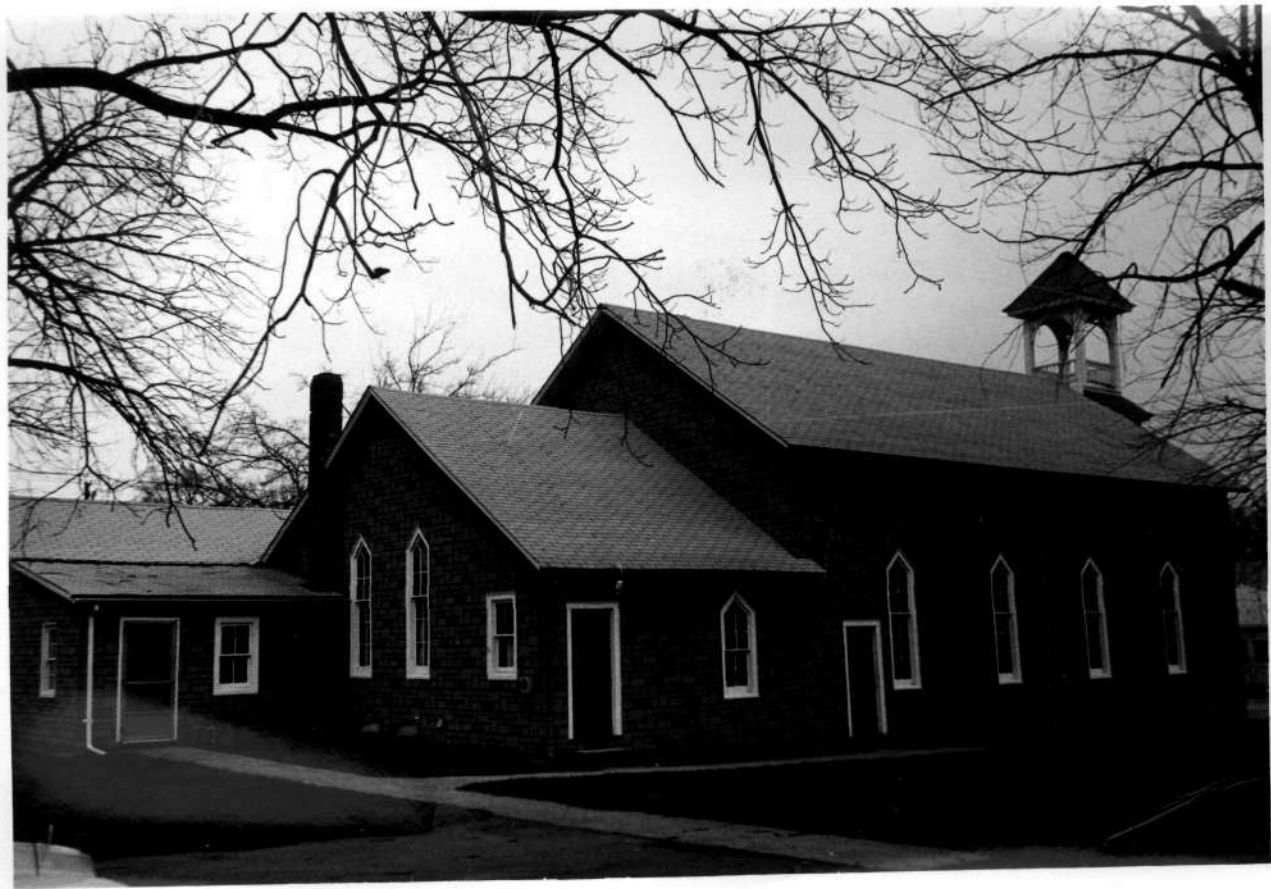


HA-1340
Ames Methodist Church
Baltimore Pike
Bel Air
Bel Air Quad
Harford County





HA - 1340 Ames Methodist Church, ~~247~~²⁴⁹ Balto Pike, Bel Air
Steel
M. Larew, 1979



14-1340

Ames Methodist Church, ~~314~~³¹⁰ Balto Pike, Bel Air
n + w elev
M. Larew, 1979



HA-1340



Front of Ames Methodist Church

HA - 1340



Back of Amis Methodist Church

HA - 1340



HA-1340



Ames Methodist Church

HA-1340



HA-1340



HA - 1340